

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 and 7-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Ho et al. Applicant traverses the rejection for the following reasons.

It is submitted that Ho et al. neither discloses nor suggests at least the steps (c)-(e) of amended claim 1. With regard to the step (c), a second photoresist film having a higher glass transition temperature than a first photoresist film is deposited on the first photoresist film. While Ho et al. seems to disclose that a photoresist film 15 is formed on another photoresist film 14b, there is no disclosure or suggestion that the second photoresist film has a higher glass transition temperature than the first photoresist film. After a careful study of the passages pointed out by the Examiner, Applicant cannot find any portion which describes or teaches the comparison of a glass transition temperature between the first and second photoresist films. The Examiner is invited to point out any other passages which describe or teach the limitations of the claimed invention.

With regard to the step (d), Ho et al. is completely moot in teaching this step. According to the claimed invention, the

first photoresist film and the second photoresist film are patterned, thereby forming a first photoresist film pattern and a second photoresist film pattern defining a first contact hole therethrough. In contrast, via holes 13(a)-13(e) are already formed even before depositing a photoresist layer 14 according to Ho et al. Again, there is no disclosure or teaching regarding this step in Ho et al.

With regard to the step (e), Ho et al. is also moot in teaching the step of implementing RFP to cause the first and second photoresist film patterns to flow so that the first contact hole changes to a second contact hole having a lower critical dimension than the first contact hole. The Examiner is requested to point out any passages which describe or teach this step.

For at least the reasons discussed above, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-4 and 7-8 are not anticipated by Ho et al. under 35 U.S.C. §102(e).

Claims 5-6 and 9-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ho et al. Applicant traverses the rejection for the following reasons.

As set forth above, Ho et al. neither discloses nor suggests all of the features of the claimed invention. Therefore, claims 5-6 and 9-11, which are dependent on claim 1,

are not made obvious over Ho et al. under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), for the same reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1.

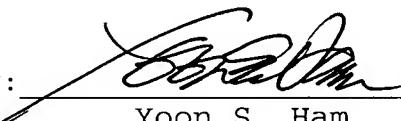
The prior art made the record and not relied upon is noted.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-11 are now in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

If any issues remain to be resolved, the Examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
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